Press release

Go ahead for Met Office HQ

11 October 2001

Construction of the new headquarters for the Met Office in Exeter will begin this month (October) following agreement today between the Met Office and the Stratus consortium comprising Costain, Skanska and Group4 Falck Global Solutions.

The project is valued at £150 million including construction costs and operating support services for a fifteen-year period.

The project will involve construction of two 'supercomputer' halls, an energy centre, computer areas, visitors/conference centre and library.

One of the biggest IT moves in Europe will see powerful computer systems and 1,150 staff move from the existing premises in Bracknell to the new site on the outskirts of Exeter, close to junction 29 on the M5 motorway. The process will be supported by consortium service partner, Logica. In total, 34,000 square metres of office space will be created.

Met Office Chief Executive Peter Ewins said:" I am delighted with this agreement which marks the beginning of a 15-year partnership with Stratus. I am confident that, working with our new partners and the people of Devon, we will succeed with this exciting venture."

The construction, carried out by a Costain-Skanska joint venture, will be completed in two years. The architect is Broadway Malyan. Group4 Falck Global Solutions will then operate support services - including property management, catering, cleaning, logistics, training and leisure facilities - in the building for 15 years.

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